

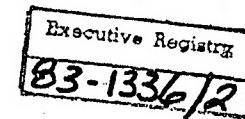
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Soviet Propaganda Alert

No. 14

May 27, 1983

SUMMARY

(Further details of the items on this sheet can be found on the referenced pages)

Major Soviet propaganda themes related to the U.S. in March and April stressed:

U.S. Thwarts Arms Control Talks. Striving for military superiority and a first-strike capability, the U.S. continues to obstruct serious discussion on arms control. President Reagan's proposal for an "interim agreement" was denounced as completely unacceptable, a dishonest propaganda ploy. See p. 1

Moral Basis of Soviet Policy. The USSR adheres to high moral standards, unlike hypocritical and sanctimonious U.S. leaders. Religious figures were enlisted in the campaign to get this message across. See p. 3

Aggressive Intent of U.S. Policy. Soviet media played up Western press reports that allegedly expose U.S. aggressiveness, asserted that the U.S. engages in chemical warfare, and denounced Reagan's plan to deploy a ballistic missile defense system in space as a further attempt to buttress offensive capabilities. See p. 4

Growing Opposition to U.S. "Militarism". The peace movement continues to gain strength, undaunted by intimidation and undeceived by propaganda on the part of the U.S. Administration. See p. 5

Nonaligned Movement Not Diverted by U.S. Despite Washington's disruptive efforts, the movement remains strong and sympathetic to Moscow. See p. 6

Regional Issues. In West Germany, an intensive propaganda campaign conducted by the U.S. and NATO helped achieve a conservative victory in the elections. See p. 7

Soviet propaganda also alleged U.S. "aggression" throughout the world--CIA support for anti-Sandinista guerrillas in Nicaragua; American complicity with Israel; and subversive activities in Poland, Afghanistan, India, and Africa.



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U.S. THWARTS ARMS CONTROL TALKS

The Soviet Union continued its intensive propaganda on arms control and disarmament issues in March and April. As in preceding months, the Soviet media sought to:

- Portray the U.S. as bent on achieving military superiority and world hegemony.
- Depict the USSR as the foremost champion of peace, a committed proponent of universal disarmament.
- Demonstrate the USSR's moral superiority to the U.S.
- Publicize the deep and growing popular opposition to American "militarism" in the U.S., Western Europe, and the Third World.

The propaganda campaign focused on the INF negotiations; relatively little attention was given to the START and MBFR talks. Particularly noteworthy were CPSU General Secretary Iurii Andropov's rejoinder to President Reagan's speech of March 23 and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko's news conference following the President's March 30 speech.

In answering a correspondent's questions (Pravda, March 27), Andropov stated that "the whole message of the [March 23 Presidential] speech is that America should arm itself and become the world's dominating military power." While claiming that the U.S. has strengthened its own strategic forces, Andropov accused the President of making "impudent distortions" of Soviet policy. In unusually sharp language, he said that Reagan "tells a deliberate untruth" ("a deliberate lie," according to TASS's more forceful English translation) by asserting that the USSR had not observed its own moratorium on the deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe. Reagan's announcement that the U.S. would develop defensive antiballistic missile weapons in space was denounced as an attempt to achieve a first-strike capability and "disarm the Soviet Union in the face of the U.S. nuclear threat." "The incumbent U.S. Administration continues to tread an extremely perilous path," Andropov warned. "All attempts at achieving military superiority over the USSR are futile.... Engaging in this is not just irresponsible, it is insane."

According to Georgii Arbatov, the USSR's foremost American specialist, if anyone had any doubts about U.S. intentions, they were dispelled by Kenneth Adelman, Reagan's appointee to head the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (Pravda, March 17). Adelman is quoted by Arbatov as having declared frankly: "Arms limitations talks are a subterfuge to which

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we were simply forced to resort in order to reassure the U.S. people and the European allies." The Administration's successful effort to gain his confirmation was seen as but another sign of its "striking cynicism." On April 19, a Pravda commentator singled out Adelman's "lack of competence in arms limitation matters," "primitive anticommunism," and putative inclination to torpedo any possible accord as "qualities especially valued by the present Washington leadership."

INF Negotiations

Lack of progress in the INF talks at Geneva was blamed on American intransigence and unwillingness to consider equitable Soviet proposals. The new U.S. proposal for an "interim" agreement was discounted in advance as a propaganda ploy. As TASS analyst Vladimir Bogarchev commented on February 25, a month before the new proposal was presented, "In the final analysis, all these 'creeping,' interim, and tentative U.S. variants boil down to the same old goal: to get the new U.S. nuclear missiles into Western Europe by hook or by crook."

On April 2, a day and a half after President Reagan announced the new U.S. proposal for the INF talks, Foreign Minister Gromyko provided an authoritative response. The news conference, his first since 1979, came nine days after he was appointed First Deputy Premier. Gromyko called the proposal "not serious," "unbalanced," "unconstructive," and "completely unacceptable." "It is not designed to open opportunities for an agreement with the Soviet Union," he said. "This is why we call on Washington to adopt a more objective approach to this question, to renounce lopsidedness, to take into account all factors including the security interests of the Soviet Union." According to Gromyko, Reagan's plan would give NATO a 2.5-to-1 superiority over the Warsaw Pact in the number of warheads. He further alleged that Western governments "do not tell the truth to the people" and that Western media ignore Soviet proposals.

The U.S. was put on notice that the USSR would respond to any new deployment of intermediate-range missiles. Writing in the February issue of the party journal Kommunist, the commander-in-chief of the Soviet strategic nuclear forces, Gen. Vladimir Tolubko, recalled Andropov's statement six weeks earlier that if the U.S. installs new missiles in Western Europe, the USSR will respond "in an adequate manner." In an interview published in the Italian newspaper La Repubblica (March 9), Vadim Zagladin, first deputy chief of the CPSU Central Committee's International Department, stated bluntly that an intermediate solution cannot be

valid. In the event of a deployment, he warned, "We will have to deploy missiles equivalent to the Pershing IIs, with an equally rapid flight time, in the vicinity of the United States." Similar threats greeted Administration plans to deploy 100 MX missiles in the U.S.

THE MORAL BASIS OF SOVIET POLICY EXTOLLED

At a Moscow ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of Marx's death, Politburo member Boris Ponomarev reaffirmed the morality of Marxism. Through dark innuendo, he contrasted it to the ignorance, hypocrisy, and evil-doing of the U.S. Administration:

Only hatred of socialism and, of course, glaring ignorance can explain the statements that the founders of Marxism-Leninism and its supporters "reject morality" since they approach it from class positions. No, the class position that expresses the interests of working people...is precisely what enables communists to consistently defend general human moral values. And those people who...try to hide the arms race policy behind God's name, who embrace the murderers of civilians at Sabra and Shatila, grant amnesties to the butchers of Song My, give shelter and protection to Nazi criminals, encourage and arm terrorist and racist regimes in Central America and southern Africa, have inspired aggression against revolutionary Nicaragua and plan "victory" in nuclear war...have no right to teach morality to communists. (Pravda, March 31)

Meanwhile, Soviet commentators moved on other fronts to stress the moral rectitude of Soviet policy. At the invitation of the Russian Orthodox Church, a conference of religious leaders from around the world was held in Moscow, March 7-9. The conference, which endorsed the nuclear freeze, provided a convenient propaganda forum at a time when the U.S. House of Representatives was considering the freeze resolution and when antinuclear groups were gearing up for Easter demonstrations in Western Europe.

Soviet spokesmen also denounced the U.S. President's statement, made to the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, on March 8, that the Soviet Union is an "evil empire." When questioned at the April 2 news conference, Gromyko said such "insulting" remarks "do not lend authority to American foreign policy" and went on to challenge American moral standards. As summarized in a broadcast to North America on April 4:

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[Gromyko] said high moral values could not be defended by a nation preparing for a nuclear war which would incinerate many hundreds of millions of human beings. This country is the United States of America. Its government, which is preparing a nuclear war with all the dire effects for civilization, has no right to speak of defending high moral values with its foreign policy.

A still more caustic statement--the open letter to President Reagan from Pimen, Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church--wedded an appeal to Christian values with complete support for Soviet policy. Printed as a paid political advertisement in the New York Times (April 3) and disseminated by TASS, the letter stated::

It is with bitterness and grief in my heart that I read your belligerent calls which sow the seeds of hatred and hostility against my motherland and threaten peace all over the world. These calls are the more so sinful as they are wrapped in the attire of Christian morals....

...
The position of many believers in the U.S.A. with regard to problems of war and peace gives us encouraging support in our efforts.... It is in this that they and we alike see the Providential Act of God. There is not a single person in our country benefiting from the production of lethal weapons, serving Mammon. There is no one who wants to unleash war for the sake of the Golden Calf (3 Kings 28, 32).

We, Soviet citizens and patriots, want to live in peace and friendship with all peoples and states. And you, Mr. President, take a great sin upon your soul when you speak about a horrible Soviet threat. There has been no such threat.

THE AGGRESSIVE INTENT OF U.S. POLICY

Soviet media distorted Western press accounts in an attempt to portray U.S. policy as starkly aggressive. The military newspaper Krasnaia zvezda (March 6) cited Der Spiegel on "the criminal plans of the U.S. Administration," "the unrestrained desire of the White House and the Pentagon to unleash nuclear war." Current U.S. policy was linked with former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who allegedly talked of how to "annihilate the Russians in the Soviet Union":

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"The Russians dominate in the Soviet Union, the Russians are enemies. If we wish to avert war, we must intimidate the Russians. If the system of deterrence does not work, we must kill the Russians above all." In the words of this unbridled anticommunist, "we must kill the Russians precisely because they are Russians."

(The words from Der Spiegel attributed to Brzezinski are, in fact, a paraphrase from an article by Thomas Powers in the November 1982 issue of the Atlantic Monthly. Quoted out of context, with significant omissions, they make Brzezinski appear both bloodthirsty and racist.)

In an article entitled "The President's April Fool Jokes" (Literaturnaia gazeta, April 6), Vitalii Kobysh, chief of the U.S. sector of the Central Committee's International Information Department, asserted that Reagan has "considered it his sacred duty" to do everything possible to hamper or wreck the arms reductions talks. The President's plan, presented in the "guise" of ABM defense, is nothing but "a vast new, purely aggressive program of military preparations"--"further evidence that the present U.S. Government is not simply preparing for nuclear war, but has set a course toward unleashing it." This charge, combined with Kobysh's hyperbolic tone, is clearly designed to discredit the U.S. and create apprehension.

In the same vein, Soviet media continued to accuse the U.S. of involvement in chemical and biological warfare. According to TASS International Service (April 12, in Russian), "the United states is not only preparing chemical weapons," but is "using and 'testing' them in various regions of the world."

After Indochina, these weapons were applied in Afghanistan.... American-produced chemical bombs are aimed at the patriots and defenseless population in El Salvador by the punitive troops of the dictatorial junta.... American chemical weapons are used in Nicaragua. In fighting with the Somozaist bands, fighters in the Sandinista People's Army have seized chemical grenades with nerve-paralyzing gas, and gas masks labelled "made in the United States." Secret plans have been worked out in Washington to use chemical weapons against Cuba and other countries.

GROWING OPPOSITION TO U.S. MILITARISM

Soviet propaganda painted a picture of a growing ground-swell of popular opposition to U.S. "militarism." The peace movement, in the Soviet view, is undaunted by U.S.

intimidation and undeceived by its propaganda. To convey a sense of widespread peace sentiment in the U.S., Soviet media continued to publish letters to Andropov, ostensibly from private American citizens (including the much-bally-hooed one from fifth-grader Samantha Smith), while publicizing criticism voiced by U.S. leaders and journalists. In a televised speech carried by Moscow Domestic Service on April 16, Georgii Zhukov, chairman of the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace, thundered:

Let U.S. Secretary of Defense Weinberger...continue to assert that the movement is organized by certain clever Soviet agents or, as he puts it, front organizations. He recently reiterated this delirious declaration in his foreword to the propagandistic Pentagon brochure entitled Soviet Military Power. Let U.S. President Reagan also continue to declare that supposedly the struggle for peace is prohibited in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, that supposedly we throw our fighters for peace into jails. Let them!

These leaders thereby only demonstrate the amazing fallacy and stupidity of their primitive and ridiculous propaganda.

NONALIGNED MOVEMENT NOT DIVERTED BY U.S.

In its prominent coverage of the meeting of nonaligned countries held in New Delhi, March 7-12, the Soviet media:

- o Portrayed the USSR and socialist states as the true friends of the nonaligned.
- o Maintained that the U.S. and its allies were doing their utmost to disrupt the movement and sever its "natural" ties with the socialist states.
- o Highlighted speeches by leaders closest to Moscow--Castro, Arafat, representatives from Afghanistan and Vietnam.
- o Asserted that--despite Washington's efforts to split the movement--it remains strong and sympathetic to the USSR.

Overlooking the decided shift in tone from the 1979 meeting in Havana, Soviet media stressed that the conference "lev-
eled sharp criticism against the aggressive policy of international imperialism, above all U.S. imperialism," and provided "convincing evidence that Washington's dangerous

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policy now encounters resistance from the overwhelming majority of the people of the world" (Sel'skaia zhizn', March 12). Ridiculing the U.S. State Department's assertion that the nonaligned movement's final declaration was "unbalanced and argumentative," Izvestiia correspondent Melor Sturua asked (March 18), "How can anyone take a 'balanced' attitude toward the supporters and opponents of imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid and racism? How can anyone take a 'balanced' attitude toward the supporters and opponents of nuclear war, the arms race, the freezing of all forms of aggression, and peaceful coexistence?"

REGIONAL ISSUES

West German Election Results

Rejecting charges that the USSR had interfered in the elections, Soviet spokesmen asserted that the U.S. and its NATO partners had conducted an intensive propaganda campaign. Izvestiia correspondents claimed on March 9:

The Washington Administration made no attempt to disguise its attempts to influence their outcome to suit itself, resorting to such tried and tested methods as crude pressure and political blackmail.... The bourgeois mass information organs, clearly directed from a single center, unleashed an unprecedented campaign of voter intimidation using the 'Soviet threat' myth....

The conservative victory was attributed to CDU success in blaming the SPD for Germany's economic problems, the ruling circles' heavy funding of the CDU campaign, and the massive U.S.-NATO propaganda effort. The SPD's "flabby" position on INF deployment was also cited as a factor. According to Soviet commentators, the elections were in no sense an endorsement of INF deployment; rather, the conservatives managed to win despite massive anti-deployment sentiment.

Central America and the Caribbean

While focusing on alleged U.S. aggression, Soviet propaganda reaffirmed the USSR's determination to aid progressive countries under siege--Nicaragua and Grenada, in particular. In the words of Pravda political observer Vsevolod Ovchinnikov (Moscow TV, April 10):

The CIA is now writing another bloody page in the chronicle of its evil-doing; counterrevolutionary bands formed and trained by CIA agents from among surviving Somozists have intruded into Nicaragua's

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territory from neighboring Honduras....

The notorious Monroe Doctrine...is understood ever more cynically in the Washington corridors of power: Latin America is the United States' patrimony. It has been accustomed to look upon it as its own backyard, where obedient dictatorships can be planned, and, when necessary, their facades can be changed using coups d'etat.

"Honduras is playing the same role in Central America that Israel plays in the Middle East," charged TASS correspondent Sergei Kudriavskii (April 12). The U.S., he added, is "not interested in a peaceful solution." U.S. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick's proposal to submit the question of U.S.-Nicaraguan relations to the Organization of American States was dismissed as a "maneuver to camouflage [U.S.] involvement in the aggression in Nicaragua."

Soviet commentators reacted scornfully to President Reagan's April 27 speech to a joint session of Congress. His statements that the USSR supports subversion in Central America were "clearly designed for simpletons," averred TASS International Service (April 28). "It is not the USSR, Cuba, or Nicaragua, but the United States itself which drives [the masses] to despair...and leaves them no other choice but to rise with weapons in hand to struggle against foreign enslavers and their local henchmen."

The Middle East

As in previous months, Soviet propaganda stressed the allegedly predatory, anti-Arab nature of U.S. policy and America's complicity with Israel. On March 28, Valentin Lapin (Moscow World Service, in English) summed up the Soviet view:

Reports from the Middle East indicate that following its invasion of Lebanon last year, Israel is preparing another phase of aggression. From the occupied Lebanese bridgehead, Israel is going to deal a blow at the Syrian contingent of the Arab peace-keeping force in Lebanon and at Syria itself.

...

The highly dangerous situation in the Middle East is rooted in the joint aggressive actions of the United States and Israel. The two strategic allies, as they call themselves, pursue the same goal. One is wiping out the Palestinian Arabs....

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And here's the latest example: More than 200 school-girls have been gassed in the Palestinian city of Janin. According to doctors, the girls were exposed to nerve gas. Toxic agents are used against Arab children; phosphorous and cluster bombs are dropped on the people of Lebanon; knives and grenades are used against the unarmed people of the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps--these are stages of a criminal aggression which Israel has been carrying out against the peoples of the Middle East with the direct backing of the United States.

On the same theme, TASS's Kornilov stated (Moscow Domestic Service, April 3), "It is now obvious to the whole world that the hilt of the Zionist dagger is in the hands of the Reagan team and the predatory U.S. oil monopolies who are striving to turn the Near East into an area reserved for brazen imperialist plunder."

According to a TASS dispatch from Beirut (April 13), CIA director William Casey visited Israel the previous week to make last-minute changes in the "American-Israeli plan for unleashing a new Middle East war." In much the same vein, Soviet commentators described Secretary of State George Shultz's trip as an American attempt to break Lebanese resistance to Israeli demands and to lay the groundwork for the attack on Syria. Shultz, in the words of one TASS correspondent (April 29), had assumed "the sordid role of Tel Aviv's lawyer."

Despite these charges, Soviet media also held Israel culpable for the April 18 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. Observing that "the Israelis alone have benefited from the incident," a TASS dispatch from Damascus (April 21) concluded: "This act of terrorism provoked by Israel creates new serious problems in ensuring a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Other Issues

In reporting on world events, Soviet propagandists emphasized the pervasiveness of U.S. aggression. Further examples of American imperialism's worldwide reach:

Washington's "unceasing provocations against People's Poland." According to Moscow Domestic Service (April 7), "the chief aim of the organizers of ideological sabotage--the attempt to discredit socialism--remains unaltered." The Voice of America is accused of "giving encouragement to the counterrevolutionary extremist elements," and Radio Free Europe (one of the CIA's "kept women") "uses the air-

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waves to transmit inflammatory calls for a boycott against everything...proposed by the [Polish] authorities."

U.S. support for counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan. The Soviet media followed their standard line in justifying the Soviet occupation. According to the DRA National Defense Minister (TASS, April 25), the USSR "is extending all-around support in repulsing outside aggression carried out by international imperialism headed by the United States."

CIA subversion in India. "While earlier it was a question of wresting the northeastern territories from India under the 'Brahmaputra' plan, now the CIA has added to them the northwestern state of Punjab and a number of other regions of the country" (Sotsialisticheskaiia industriia, March 4). According to TASS (April 13), American and Pakistani espionage services send Afghan "counterrevolutionary scum" to India to carry out subversion.

CIA plans for coups, assassinations in Africa. "In Lagos, Nigeria, the press has published [CIA] documents... containing plans for the assassination of two prominent political figures.... In Ghana, the United States Ambassador was found to be helping groups that were trying to organize an invasion with a view to overthrowing the legitimate government.... The covert actions of the CIA have taken on catastrophic proportions since the Reagan Administration came to power and began to make greater use of it to achieve United States objectives in Africa. CIA operations have been exposed in eastern Africa and in Mozambique and Zambia, and now in Nigeria and Ghana. The Reagan Administration automatically classifies as opponents all countries that refuse to toe Washington's line and then instructs the CIA to act" (Moscow English broadcast to North America, April 18).

Cruise missiles in the Near East and Africa. The Pentagon allegedly plans to deploy cruise missiles in proximity to the Strait of Hormoz and Bab al Mandab (broadcast from Baku, in Azeri, March 14) as well as in the Republic of South Africa (Moscow Domestic Television, March 9).

U.S.-Japanese militarism. "The Pentagon is pressing forward with its plans to build up the U.S. Navy in the Far East and to turn the Japanese archipelago into a strategic staging area for adventurist actions in the region" (TASS, in English, March 16). Aided by the "militaristic" Nakasone government, the U.S. "intends to create in Japan a mighty nuclear missile strike force aimed against the Soviet Union" (Krasnaia zvezda, April 17).

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